



Brownfields 2006 Grant Fact Sheet

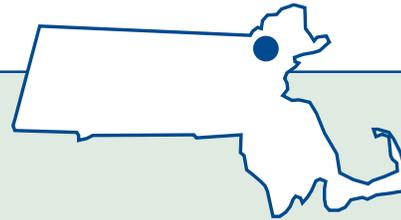
Merrimack Valley Planning Commission, MA

EPA Brownfields Program

EPA's Brownfields Program empowers states, communities, and other stakeholders to work together to prevent, assess, safely clean up, and sustainably reuse brownfields. A brownfield site is real property, the expansion, redevelopment, or reuse of which may be complicated by the presence or potential presence of a hazardous substance, pollutant, or contaminant. On January 11, 2002, President George W. Bush signed into law the Small Business Liability Relief and Brownfields Revitalization Act. Under the Brownfields Law, EPA provides financial assistance to eligible applicants through four competitive grant programs: assessment grants, revolving loan fund grants, cleanup grants, and job training grants. Additionally, funding support is provided to state and tribal response programs through a separate mechanism.

Community Description

The Merrimack Valley Planning Commission (MVPC) was selected to receive two brownfields assessment grants. The MVPC is a regional planning agency that serves 15 cities and towns (total population 318,556) in northeast Massachusetts. As the "Birthplace of the American Industrial Revolution," the Merrimack Valley is struggling with many of the same problems facing other historic areas of New England. Key among these problems is the environmental legacy of the region's long industrial past. According to the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protec-



Assessment Grants

**New
2006**

***\$200,000 for hazardous substances
\$200,000 for petroleum***

EPA has selected the Merrimack Valley Planning Commission for two brownfields assessment grants. Hazardous substances grant funds will be used to update, prioritize, and maintain the region's brownfields inventory of sites, perform Phase I and II environmental site assessments, and conduct community outreach programs throughout the Valley. Petroleum grant funds will be used to perform the same tasks for sites with potential petroleum contamination.

Contacts

For further information, including specific grant contacts, additional grant information, brownfields news and events, and publications and links, visit the EPA Brownfields web site at: www.epa.gov/brownfields.

EPA Region 1 Brownfields Team
617-918-1424
<http://www.epa.gov/region01/brownfields/>

Grant Recipient: Merrimack Valley Planning
Commission, MA
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The cooperative agreement for this grant has not yet been negotiated; therefore, activities described in this fact sheet are subject to change.

tion, the Valley has more than 300 brownfields properties that have not been assessed or cleaned up. These sites exacerbate the already weakened regional economy that is burdened by high unemployment and high poverty rates. In addition to environmental justice concerns related to poverty and income, the Merrimack Valley has a large Hispanic population, 17 percent, as compared to the state's 6.8 percent. In the City of Lawrence, the most populous community in the Valley, more than 21 percent of families live below the poverty

level, and nearly 60 percent of residents are Hispanic. Assessment of the Valley's brownfields sites, and their eventual cleanup and redevelopment, is expected to spur much-needed business and housing growth and help preserve the local environment.